

NATIONAL CANNERS ASSOCIATION

Information Letter

FOR N. C. A. MEMBERS

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Tentative Change in Membership Letter

With this number the Membership Letter appears in printed form, the change having been made at the suggestion of members of the Association who expressed a desire to have the material in the letters available in a more permanent and more easily filed form. In size, the Letter now conforms to the style of other bulletins issued by the Association.

Printing the letter involves additional expense and requires completion of the copy one day earlier in the week. Whether the change to printed form will be permanent depends upon the desire of the membership, and we shall be glad to receive your comments and suggestions.

Conference on Simplification of Fibre Containers

Upon the invitation of the U. S. Department of Commerce, a conference was held at the office of the Manufacturers' Association of New York in New York City, Friday, April 17, on the simplification of fibre containers. The conference was presided over by Mr. Gately of the Division of Simplified Practice of the Department of Commerce, and about thirty representatives of users of fibre boxes were present.

Mr. Gately and representatives of the box manufacturers explained what the manufacturers' Simplified Practice Committee had recommended in the way of simplification by proposed reduction in the number of thicknesses of fibre board for manufacture of boxes. It is felt by these manufacturers that reduction in the number of thicknesses of fibre board will result in considerable economy and increased efficiency, which will eventually mean reduction in the price of boxes to consumers. Manufacturers believe that it is now up to the users of boxes to determine whether they will adhere to the simplified list of thicknesses which is proposed.

It appears from the report that was sent out by the committee of manufacturers, that these proposed changes do not affect shipping cases made of fibre, specifications for which are fixed by the traffic associations, so that the proposition does not appear to be of particular importance to canners. Nevertheless it was recommended by the conference that the Department of Commerce send a summary of the proposed changes to all interested associations of consumers for the purpose of getting their views before taking any further action on the subject.

Increased Activity in Agricultural Research

NEW YORK LEGISLATURE APPROPRIATES FUNDS: The New York legislature at a recent session passed a bill appropriating to the New York Agricultural Experiment Station a special fund of \$20,500 per year for increased research on canning crops. The Director of the Raw Products Bureau participated in a conference recently at Geneva with a committee of the Association of New York State Canners and a group from the Experiment Stations to shape up preliminary plans for research projects to be undertaken with the new funds. Needs were considered with respect to improvement of peas, beans, sweet corn, beets, small fruits, and tree fruits. Work in insect and plant disease control will be expanded as soon as the addition to the research staff can be secured.

Director Thatcher announced the formation of a canning crop committee from the agricultural research staffs of Cornell University and the Geneva Experiment Station, consisting of Drs. Massey and Stewart representing plant pathology, Drs. Parrott and Herrick representing entomology, and Drs. Hedrick and Thompson representing horticulture and plant breeding.

INDIANA CANNERS PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR PURDUE STATION: In order to provide for research on the canning and pulp making quality of tomato strains and varieties, the Indiana Canners Association, through the Seed Committee, has arranged to finance a research fellowship at the Purdue University Agricultural Experiment Station at Lafayette, Ind. A tentative memo submitted by Professor Greene of Purdue states the objects of the fellowship to be:

(1) To study the factors responsible for varying quality in tomatoes, including color, structure, sugar content, acidity, specific gravity, total solids and other factors and their inter-relationships, as well as the extent to which they may be modified by conditions which may be controlled.

(2) To study the relative quality of existing varieties of tomatoes. If high quality varieties are discovered, such varieties will be used in improving the Indiana Baltimore.

(3) To study the effect of environmental conditions upon quality in tomatoes.

ARMOUR FERTILIZER WORKS INTERESTED IN TOMATOES: It was announced at the Purdue conference that a research fellowship has been established with the Horticultural Department by the Armour Fertilizer Works of Chicago. The objects will be to study the fertilizer needs of the tomato crop on typical Indiana soils, and to study the effect of the various fertilizer treatments on color, specific gravity, quality, flavor, solidity, freedom from cracking, and other characters of the fruit.

EARLY CONFERENCES SCHEDULED IN ILLINOIS, OHIO AND MICHIGAN: The Director of the Raw Products Research Bureau conferred with Illinois canners at Chicago recently and states that other conferences with canners and College and Experiment Station groups will be held soon in Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio.

Definitions and Standards Committee Meets

A meeting of the Committee on Definitions and Standards of the National Canners Association was held in Chicago in connection with the Western Canners Association Convention, the Chairman, Mr. Merritt Greene of Iowa, presiding. Though the attendance was not large, an interesting discussion of the general subject of standards for canned foods took place.

It is realized from the number of bills introduced in the recent Congress which include the subject of standards for agricultural products, that this is a very live topic and that some sort of federal standards for foods that can be enforced may be authorized in the near future. The Committee feels, however, that the formulation of standards for canned foods is beset with peculiar difficulty and that action should be taken only after mature consideration. Conditions in various localities, and from season to season, differ so widely for the same product that definitions and standards that are national in scope must almost necessarily be so broad as to have little value.

For the present the committee's efforts will be directed largely to a review of work previously done on the subject, with the purpose of laying plans for future work that will be most effective and helpful to the industry and the consuming public.

Recommends Pressure Cooker for Home Canning of Non-Acid Vegetables

In a recent Clip Sheet issued by the Press Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, the Department recommends the use of the steam-pressure canner for processing all non-acid vegetables.

"When non-acid vegetables, such as asparagus, string beans, corn, spinach, and others, are canned at home," the articles states, "the Department of Agriculture believes they should be processed in steam under pressure at temperatures higher than can be obtained in a water bath. The times and temperatures vary from 40 minutes at 10 pounds pressure (240° F.) for quart glass jars of asparagus to 80 minutes at 15 pounds pressure (250° F.) for corn in the same size containers, according to the time tables devised by the Department."

Investigation Saves Large Proportion of Condemned Product

If action is taken by Federal or State authorities against products of member canners, it will generally pay such members to take the matter up with the Washington office of the National Canners Association. Though "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" in such matters, as in many others, the Association is always glad to make an investigation of the nature and basis of the charges and assist its members in every way possible.

Recently the Association's technical staff has been instrumental in saving about 1,200 cases out of a lot of canned food seized by the Government, a joint examination by representatives of the Bureau of Chemistry and of the Association having shown that a large proportion of the shipment was of satisfactory quality.

Seeks Information on Simpler Tax Practices

Before his departure for Europe, Chairman W. R. Green, of the House Ways and Means Committee, stated that the purpose of his visit, particularly to England and France, was to study the tax methods there followed, in the hope of learning something of the simpler practices in those countries which permit an earlier and final settlement of returns and final audits. Accompanying Mr. Green is Dr. Thomas A. Adams of Yale University.

At present, according to Mr. Green, we are greatly hampered in this country by the fact that the final audit of the tax returns is often subject to a long delay. He believes that we should get this work brought up to date and that when settlements are once made with the taxpayer by the Treasury Department they should be final, in the absence of fraud or such concealment as evinces a fraudulent intent. Business men, he maintains, ought not to be harassed by being called upon to make a further return after several years have expired, when they are not able to produce the necessary evidence and when their accounts may have been lost or destroyed.